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The authors throughout see personalities and events rather than fundamental and deep-rooted causes.

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WEBB, SIDNEY and BEATRICE. *English Local Government; The Story of the King's Highway*. Pp. x, 279. Price, \$2.50. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1913.

This volume is a continuation of the work on English local government begun by Mr. and Mrs. Webb in 1899. It presents aspects of contrast and of similarity with its three predecessors in the series. They dealt with organs of local government during the period from 1688 to 1835. The present is a study of one function of local government, and, in the words of the authors, "we have made it begin with the war-chariot of Boadicea and brought it down to the motor omnibus of today" (p. vii). Like the previous volumes, however, this is based on patient researches in widely scattered sources, and the same still is displayed in marshaling a wealth of illustrative detail in such a way as not to burden or obscure a clear and logical narrative. Copious references to authorities enhance the value of the work to the historical student, but their relegation to appendices following the several chapters renders their study more difficult without in any way aiding the reader who may desire to skip them.

In the apportionment of the narrative the motor omnibus fares somewhat better than the war-chariot. The special investigations of the authors go no further back than the sixteenth century, and the history of road maintenance previous to that time is dismissed with a brief summary of nine pages. The analysis of the road legislation of the Tudors and Stuarts, however, is masterly. By these laws the parish was left responsible for the upkeep of existing highways and the surveyors of highways and the justices of the peace were given ample powers between them to enforce this responsibility. But an excellent account of the working of this system shows that neither the average surveyor nor the average justice took his duties in this connection very seriously. The compulsory labor on the roads required of all parishioners became a farce, highway rates were rarely levied, and, though the parish was criminally liable before quarter sessions for neglect to maintain passable roads, such liability appears to have been only occasionally enforced. The roads could be used only by horsemen and not always by them.

In the seventeenth century a new demand was made on the roads by the beginning of traffic on wheels. Eventually this increased in volume until it revolutionized the methods of making roads and necessitated the creation of new administrative agencies. The story of this slow development, beginning with the attempt to make the new vehicles conform to the existing roads by regulating their size and weight, continuing through the turnpike stage and through the era of transition under Telford and Macadam, and ending with the complete reorganization of highway administration during the nineteenth century, is graphically and entertainingly told.

But the work of the historians does not end with the nineteenth century,

for the present century has brought its own problems of road maintenance. The authors find that the appearance of the motor car has produced effects on public opinion and on administration parallel to those produced by the advent of new users of the roads three centuries ago. They conclude, therefore, by suggesting the administrative reforms which should be made to meet the new traffic conditions.

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WINTER, NEVIN O. *The Russian Empire of Today and Yesterday.* Pp. xvii, 487. Price, \$3.00. Boston: L. C. Page and Company, 1913.

Many books have been written about Russia but few of them give a comprehensive picture that is at once up-to-date and reliable. Russia is so large, her various sections so different, her people so diverse, that misconceptions concerning both the land and the people are easily gained. St. Petersburg is not Russia, neither is Kiev, nor the Jewish Pale. Russian officials and political leaders are not the Russian people. And yet to many, Russia has been represented by some restricted part or by a single element in its enormous population. National, as well as ethnic, unity is still lacking in the Empire of the Czar and Russia is most difficult of interpretation.

This book is descriptive of Russia rather than interpretive. Its purpose, evidently, is to picture the Russia of today in her various aspects and to tell briefly the story of her marvelous expansion. It does not rank as a critical study with such books as Drage's *Russian Affairs* or von Schierbrand's *Russia*, but it does what few other books have done for the English reader, that is, it gives a description of the whole land and people of European Russia as seen by a trained and experienced observer of national affairs.

The first part of the book consists of regional descriptions. After a chapter on Russia as a whole, the various larger divisions are treated, as Great Russia, Little Russia, the Land of the Cossacks, Poland and the Baltic Provinces, and so on. Then follow a series of chapters on social conditions, indicated by some of the chapter titles as follows: noble and Tchinovink, the peasants and their communes, the Jewish Pale and its unfortunates, education, religious forces, etc. A final group of chapters deals with historical and political topics, more especially those of recent date. Here are discussed Nihilism and revolution, autocracy and bureaucracy, the beginnings of representative government, etc. The author's conclusions are based upon his own observations carried on in all parts of European Russia, and his descriptions are not only fresh and vivid, but sane, accurate and unbiased. The book gives just what the general reader wants to know. It is attractively bound, fully illustrated and contains a bibliography and index. Although entitled "The Russian Empire," it does not treat of Siberia nor of the Russian Central Asian provinces.

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